

What is a Baby-Friendly Hospital?

Baby-Friendly hospitals help parents and babies get off to a great start. Right after your baby is born, the nursing staff stays close to you so you can start breastfeeding as soon as you are ready. You'll be encouraged to keep your baby near you all the time, so you can learn more about their behavior and how to take care of them. The staff has extra training to help you with feeding your baby and answer any questions you have. They can help you in the hospital and help you find additional support after you go home.

To help you succeed with your feeding goals, here are the things Baby Friendly hospitals do:

1

Follow all guidelines about baby formula, have a clear baby feeding plan that everyone knows about, and keep track of how well the feeding plan works.

Ask your nurse if they are familiar with the feeding policy and if you can see a copy.

2

Make sure their staff knows how to help with breastfeeding.

Ask your nurse or doctor about what they learned in their Baby-Friendly training and how it can help you.

3

Talk to pregnant birthing people and their families about human milk feeding and how to do it.

Attend classes when you are pregnant to learn about birth and breastfeeding.

4

Help moms and babies have skin-to-skin contact right after birth and start breastfeeding as soon as possible.

Ask to have your baby on your chest right after they are born. Ask if this can be done anywhere, even if you need a c-section.

5

Help moms start breastfeeding and help them solve common problems.

Ask for help with breastfeeding. If you or your baby are sick, ask about hand expression or how to use a breast pump.

6

Do not give breastfed babies any food or drink other than breast milk unless it's needed for health reasons.

Ask your nurse or doctor how to know if feedings are going well. Ask if you can give your breast milk if the baby is sick or in the nursery.

7

Let moms and babies stay together in the same room all day and night so they can get to know each other.

During the day, ask your nurse or doctor how they can help you at night when the baby is awake. Or ask if your partner or another person can be with you at night to help with the baby.

8

Help moms learn when their baby is hungry and needs to be fed.

Feed your baby whenever they are sucking on their hands or looking around to suck. Most babies will nurse at least 8 times a day after the first night. Ask your nurse what other signs you can look for to know if your baby is hungry.

9

Talk to families about how using bottles or pacifiers can change how a baby sucks.

Ask your nurse or doctor how a bottle or pacifier can affect your baby and your milk supply.

10

Make sure parents know where to get help and support after they leave the hospital.

Ask for a copy of the hospital's resource list before your baby is born or as soon as you arrive at the hospital.



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